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(AMERICANS)

VIENNA--TWO AMERICAN TOURISTS EXPELLED FROM THE SOVIET UNION STRONGLY DENIED TODAY THEY PLEADED GUILTY TO CHARGES OF ESPIONAGE BEFORE A SOVIET MILITARY COURT.

MARK KAMINSKY, 32, OF JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP, MICH., AND HARVEY BENNETT, 26, OF BATH, MAINE, TOLD A NEWS CONFERENCE AT THE U.S. CONSULATE HERE THEY WERE THROWN OUT OF RUSSIA AFTER SEVEN WEEKS OF DETENTION IN KIEV, WESTERN UKRAINE, AND UZHGOROD.

KAMINSKY TOLD UPI EARLIER THE SOVIET MILITARY TRIAL THAT SENTENCED HIM TO SEVEN YEARS' IMPRISONMENT "WAS LIKE ALL SOVIET TRIALS -- GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INNOCENT."

KAMINSKY SAID HE PLEADED GUILTY TO THE OFFICIAL CHARGE OF "COLLECTING MATERIAL AND CONDUCTING ACTIVITIES INCOMPATIBLE WITH THOSE OF A REGULAR TOURIST".

"SINCE THEY HAD ALL MY FILMS AND NOTES ON MILITARY ACTIVITIES, HE SAID, "IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT I WAS NOT SIMPLY A TOURIST."

BENNETT DENIED REPORTS BY TASS THAT HE DENOUNCED KAMINSKY BEFORE THE MILITARY COURT WHICH TRIED HIM ON SEPT. 12.

"I SIMPLY AGREED THAT PERHAPS WE WERE NOT NORMAL TOURISTS," HE SAID. "HOWEVER, WHEN I ASKED THEM WHAT THEY CONSIDERED NORMAL TOURISTS, THEY SIMPLY POINTED AT US AND SAID 'YOU ARE NOT'."

KAMINSKY AND BENNETT ARRIVED HERE THIS MORNING. THE MEN SAID THEY WERE "VERY HAPPY TO TALK TO AN AMERICAN AGAIN" AS THEY CHATTED WITH A UPI REPORTER NEAR THE FREIGHT OFFICE WHERE THEY UNLOADED THE RENTED CAR THAT TOOK THEM INTO THE SOVIET UNION.

THE AMERICANS TOLD UPI THEY WERE ARRESTED AND TAKEN TO KIEV IN THE WESTERN UKRAINE. KAMINSKY SAID HE WAS JAILED FOR SEVEN WEEKS WHILE BENNETT SPENT THE TIME IN A KIEV HOTEL.

BENNETT SAID HE WAS TREATED "ALL RIGHT" IN THE HOTEL AND KAMINSKY SAID HIS SOVIET JAILERS TREATED HIM "VERY WELL...SURPRISINGLY WELL." BOTH LOOKED WELL.

BOTH SAID THEY HAD NO IDEA WHY THEY WERE RELEASED. "IT IS A MYSTERY TO US," SAID BENNETT.

CPYRIGHT THEY SAID THEY PLANNED TO TAKE THE FIRST PLANE OUT OF VIENNA FOR THE UNITED STATES.

BENNETT SAID HE WAS SURPRISED TO LEARN THE U.S. GOVERNMENT HAD MADE REPEATED EFFORTS TO FIND THEM DURING THE TWO MONTHS AFTER THEY DISAPPEARED IN THE SOVIET UNION.

"WE HAD NO IDEA THAT OUR CASE HAD AROUSED SUCH A FUROR IN THE UNITED STATES," BENNETT TOLD UPI.

"IN FACT, THE RUSSIANS ASKED ME ONLY LAST WEEK WHY THERE HAD BEEN NO INQUIRIES FROM THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES ON OUR FATE."

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